



## Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 38**

February Session, 2014

Substitute Senate Bill No. 203

*Senate, March 18, 2014*

The Committee on Children reported through SEN. BARTOLOMEO of the 13th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

***AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-WIDE SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT AWARENESS PROGRAM.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1       Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2014*) (a) Not later than January 1,  
2       2015, the Department of Children and Families, in collaboration with  
3       the Departments of Education and Social Services and Connecticut  
4       Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc. or a similar entity, shall identify or  
5       develop a state-wide sexual abuse and assault awareness program for  
6       use by local and regional boards of education. Such program shall be  
7       implemented in each public school and shall include:
- 8       (1) Instructional modules for all teachers to include training  
9       regarding the prevention and identification of, and response to, child  
10      sexual abuse and assault;
- 11      (2) Age-appropriate educational materials for grades two to five,  
12      inclusive, regarding child sexual abuse and assault that may include,

13 but not be limited to: (A) Warning signs that a child victim of sexual  
 14 abuse or assault may display, and (B) resources to further student,  
 15 teacher and parental education and outreach; and

16 (3) A uniform child sexual abuse and assault response policy and  
 17 reporting procedure that may include, but not be limited to: (A)  
 18 Actions that child victims of sexual abuse and assault may take to  
 19 obtain assistance, (B) intervention and counseling options for child  
 20 victims of sexual abuse and assault, (C) access to educational resources  
 21 to enable child victims of sexual abuse and assault to succeed in  
 22 school, and (D) uniform procedures for reporting instances of child  
 23 sexual abuse and assault to school staff members.

24 (b) Not later than July 1, 2015, the State Board of Education shall  
 25 implement the sexual abuse and assault awareness program identified  
 26 or developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

27 (c) No student in grades two to five, inclusive, may be required by  
 28 any local or regional board of education to participate in the sexual  
 29 abuse and assault awareness program offered within the public  
 30 schools. A written notification to the local or regional board by the  
 31 student's parent or legal guardian shall be sufficient to exempt the  
 32 student from such program in its entirety or from any portion thereof  
 33 so specified by the parent or legal guardian.

34 (d) If a student is exempted from the sexual abuse and assault  
 35 awareness program pursuant to subsection (c) of this section, the local  
 36 or regional board of education shall provide, during the period of time  
 37 in which the student would otherwise be participating in such  
 38 program, an opportunity for other study or academic work.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	July 1, 2014	New section
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**KID** Joint Favorable Subst.

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

### ***OFA Fiscal Note***

***State Impact:*** None

***Municipal Impact:***

<b>Municipalities</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>FY 15 \$</b>	<b>FY 16 \$</b>
Local and Regional School Districts	STATE MANDATE - Cost	less than 500 per district	less than 500 per district

### ***Explanation***

The bill requires local and regional school districts to provide age appropriate education materials for grades two through five, and may include (1) warning signs a child victim might exhibit and (2) resources to further student, teacher, and parental education and outreach. This would result in a minimal cost, of less than \$500 per district associated with copying and distributing the materials.

There is no fiscal impact to the Department of Children and Families to identify, over a six month period, a state-wide sexual abuse and assault awareness program in collaboration with the Departments of Education and Social Services, as tools, curricula and programs designed to raise awareness and reduce risk factors related to child sexual abuse are available through federal, state and community resources.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Federal resources include the National Sexual Violence Resource Center and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families' Child Welfare Information Gateway. The Gateway contains, among other resources, a link to Vermont's Sexual Violence Prevention Technical Assistance Resource Guide for school communities, K-12, to incorporate sexual violence prevention into health education curriculum.

***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above, for local and regional school districts, would continue into the future subject to the cost of distributing materials.

**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 203*****AN ACT CONCERNING A STATE-WIDE SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT AWARENESS PROGRAM.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires, by January 1, 2015, the Department of Children and Families, together with the departments of Education and Social Services and Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc., or a similar organization, to identify or develop a statewide sexual abuse and assault awareness program for use by regional and local school boards. The State Board of Education must implement the program in each public school by July 1, 2015.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

**SEXUAL ABUSE AND ASSAULT AWARENESS PROGRAM**

The program must include:

1. instructional modules for teachers,
2. age-appropriate educational materials for grades two through five, and
3. a uniform child sexual abuse and assault response policy and reporting procedure.

Under the bill, the instructional modules must include training on preventing, identifying, and responding to child sexual abuse and assault. The age-appropriate materials for students in grades two through five may include (1) warning signs a child victim might exhibit and (2) resources to further student, teacher, and parental education and outreach.

The response policy and reporting procedure may include:

1. actions child victims may take to get help,
2. intervention and counseling options for child victims,
3. access to educational resources to help child victims succeed in school, and
4. uniform procedures for reporting instances of child sexual abuse and assault to school staff.

***Exemptions from Program***

The bill allows students in grades two through five to opt out of the awareness program or any part of it if the student's parent or legal guardian so notifies the school board in writing. School boards must provide exempt students with opportunities to study or do schoolwork when the student would otherwise be participating in the program.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea    12    Nay   0    (03/04/2014)